

Message Text

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ACTION PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-07 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07
IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 SP-02
SS-15 TRSE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05 ACDA-10 NEA-10 CCO-00
SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /095 W
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O 292150Z MAR 77 ZFF-4
FM USDEL SECRETARY IN MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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FOR S/PRS; DEPARTMENT PASS NSC FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI
AND WHITE HOUSE FOR MR. POWELL; USIA FOR IPS/PE

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R)
SUBJECT: SECVISIT: MARCH 29 PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 056619

FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE'S
PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AT AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE MARCH 29
2000 HOURS LOCAL TIME:

(BEGIN TEXT)

SECRETARY VANCE: LET ME GIVE YOU A BRIEF FILL-IN ON WHAT
WE COVERED TODAY. WE HAD TWO MEETINGS; ONE IN THE MORNING
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AND WE MET AGAIN THIS AFTERNOON STARTING AT 4:30 AND JUST
FINISHED A FEW MOMENTS AGO. IN THE MORNING WE COVERED TWO
AREAS: MUTUAL BALANCED FORCE REDUCTIONS DISCUSSIONS WHICH
HAVE BEEN GOING ON IN VIENNA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST. IN
THE AFTERNOON SESSION, WE COVERED A NUMBER OF ITEMS--THE
COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN, DEMILITARIZATION OF THE INDIAN
OCEAN, NONPROLIFERATION, CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS, THE

PROPOSAL OF THE SOVIETS WITH RESPECT TO WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, AND TOUCHED JUST VERY VERY BRIEFLY AT THE END ON SOUTHERN AFRICA. AS YOU CAN SEE IT WAS A FULL DAY WITH MANY SUBJECTS BEFORE US FOR DISCUSSION. WE AGREED IN A NUMBER OF THESE AREAS TO SET UP FOLLOW-ON WORKING GROUPS TO CONTINUE THE DISCUSSIONS THAT WE STARTED TODAY. I WON'T TRY AND GIVE YOU A LIST OF THE VARIOUS ISSUES TODAY BUT BEFORE THE END OF THE MISSION I WILL INDICATE WHICH ARE THE AREAS IN WHICH WE ARE GOING TO HAVE THE FOLLOW-ON WORKING GROUPS.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, WERE YOU DISAPPOINTED BY THE FACT THAT SALT DID NOT BECOME THE CENTERPIECE OF TODAY'S DISCUSSIONS?

SECRETARY VANCE: NO, I WAS NOT. INDEED, I WAS GLAD THAT IT DIDN'T COME UP TODAY BECAUSE IT INDICATES TO ME THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO THE QUESTION OF SALT AND TO THE PROPOSALS WHICH HAVE BEEN TABLED. I'M NOT TRYING TO BE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THAT BUT I DO THINK IT INDICATES THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO IT.

QUESTION: IS THERE AN INDICATION THAT THE POLITBURO PERHAPS IS MEETING ON THE SALT PROPOSAL?

SECRETARY VANCE: I DON'T KNOW.

QUESTION: ON THE MIDDLE EAST, MR. SECRETARY, DID YOU GET THE FEELING IN GENERAL THAT THE SOVIETS WERE BEING HELP- UNCLASSIFIED

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FUL OR CONSTRUCTIVE IN ANY WAY, AND PARTICULARLY DID YOU GET ANY ENLIGHTMENT ON MR. GROMYKO'S REMARK IN HIS TOAST YESTERDAY?

SECRETARY VANCE: I HAD THE FEELING THAT THEY WERE BEING CONSTRUCTIVE, THAT THEY WISHED TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE AND ACTIVE ROLE AS CO-CHAIRMEN. WE WELCOME THAT FACT. WE THINK WE BOTH HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA TO TRY AND SEE THAT PROGRESS IS MADE TOWARDS A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, AND THEREFORE, I WELCOME THAT.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, DOES THE STATEMENT YESTERDAY MEAN WHAT IT SEEMS TO MEAN?

SECRETARY VANCE: WHICH ONE ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

QUESTION: ON THE MIDDLE EAST; SPECIFICALLY, THAT THE SOVIET POSITION CURRENTLY IS THAT THE QUESTION OF PLO PARTICIPATION CAN AWAIT DISCUSSION INSIDE THE CONFERENCE.

SECRETARY VANCE: YOU'D BETTER LET THEM SPEAK TO THAT.
I DON'T WANT TO... WE BOTH AGREED THAT WE WILL NOT COMMENT
ON WHAT THE OTHER SIDE SAID AND LET THEM SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

QUESTION: LET ME JUST ASK YOU GENERALLY ON THAT POINT:
ARE YOU SOMEWHAT MORE INTERESTED IN THE PROPOSAL THAN
WITHOUT EXAMINING IT FURTHER?

SECRETARY VANCE: WELL, ALL I WANT TO SAY ON THE MIDDLE
EAST TODAY IS THAT I FOUND THE DISCUSSION USEFUL. WE
REVIEWED ALL OF THE ISSUES, BOTH PROCEDURAL AND SUBSTANTIVE.
I THINK I HAVE A FULLER AND MORE COMPLETE
UNDERSTANDING NOW OF THE SOVIET POSITION AND I'LL LET IT
GO AT THAT TODAY.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, HOW CLOSE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE
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TO A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN?

SECRETARY VANCE: WE HAD A GOOD DISCUSSION ON THAT TODAY.
THERE ARE SOME OBVIOUS ISSUES IN THAT AREA THAT HAVE TO
BE FURTHER EXPLORED BUT I THOUGHT THAT THE TALKS IN THAT
AREA WERE USEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE, AS I DID PARTICULARLY
IN THE AREA OF NONPROLIFERATION.

QUESTION: DID ANYONE IN THE SOVIET DELEGATION INDICATE TO
YOU THAT THEY ARE NOW GIVING SERIOUS STUDY TO THE PROPOSAL
ON SALT?

SECRETARY VANCE: I DIDN'T ASK ABOUT IT.

QUESTION: THERE ARE NO OTHER PROBLEMS HERE?

SECRETARY VANCE: NO OTHER PROBLEMS HERE.

QUESTION: WAS THERE ANY ALLUSION AT ALL TODAY TO HUMAN
RIGHTS?

SECRETARY VANCE: NO ALLUSION TO HUMAN RIGHTS TODAY.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, IN THE PAST THE RUSSIANS HAVE NOT
EVER SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED OR RESPONDED TO US WHEN WE HAVE
SUGGESTED A CONVENTIONAL ARMS REDUCTION TO AREAS SUCH
AS THE MIDDLE EAST. WAS THAT A SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION
TODAY? DID YOU GET THE FEELING THAT THEY WOULD CONSIDER
SUCH AN APPROACH?

SECRETARY VANCE: YES, IT WAS A SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION

AGAIN TODAY. AS I INDICATED TO YOU EARLIER WE HAVE IN THE PAST DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. AND AS I HAVE INDICATED PREVIOUSLY THE PROBLEM THERE REMAINS THE UNRESOLVED POLITICAL ISSUE AND MY JUDGMENT IS THAT IT IS GOING TO

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BE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE ANY SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN ARMS TRANSFERS THERE UNTIL THE POLITICAL DIFFERENCES AMONG THE PARTIES ARE RESOLVED.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, WHEN YOU SPOKE ABOUT SOUTHERN AFRICA...

SECRETARY VANCE: EXCUSE ME, WE'VE GOT A QUESTION RIGHT HERE.

QUESTION: ON THE ISSUE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, DID YOU DISCUSS PRESIDENT PODGORNY'S RECENT STATEMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AT ALL?

SECRETARY VANCE: NO, WE JUST TOUCHED VERY VERY BRIEFLY ON IT AND WE REALLY DIDN'T SPEND MUCH TIME ON IT.

QUESTION: (INAUDIBLE) CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS, DID YOU DISCUSS IT IN REFERENCE TO AFRICA AS WELL?

SECRETARY VANCE: YES.

QUESTION: COULD YOU EXPAND ON THAT AT ALL?

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FM USDEL SECRETARY IN MOSCOW

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SECRETARY VANCE: I REALLY DON'T WANT TO EXPAND ON IT AT THIS POINT OTHER THAN TO SAY THAT WE TOUCHED BOTH MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA, AND THE GENERAL PROBLEMS OF AFRICA.

QUESTION: ON THE VIENNA TALKS, MR. SECRETARY, IS THERE ANY HOPE THAT YOU SEE NOW THAT THE ICE WILL BE THAWED?

SECRETARY VANCE: WELL I THINK WE BOTH AGREED THAT WE FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO TRY TO GET THAT OUT OF THE DOLDRUMS. IT'S SOMETHING THAT IN MY JUDGMENT SHOULD BE DONE. IT WOULD BE VERY MUCH IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL OF US TO MAKE THAT KIND OF MOVEMENT. I DON'T WANT TO MAKE ANY PREDICTIONS, HOWEVER, ON THE BASIS OF OUR DISCUSSIONS TODAY THAT SOMETHING IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, WE'RE GETTING DOWN NOW TO THE LAST TWO SESSIONS. COULD YOU GIVE US SOME IDEA OF YOUR UNCLASSIFIED

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SENSE OF WHEN YOU EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO RESPOND PARTICULARLY TO THE AMERICAN PRIORITY OF A COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE?

SECRETARY VANCE: I CAN'T GIVE YOU A PRECISE ANSWER ON THAT, MR. KALB. I WISH I COULD. MY BEST GUESS IS THAT THE SUBJECT WILL COME UP TOMORROW.

QUESTION: MR. VANCE, THE UNITED PRESS WAS INFORMED TODAY BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WILL NOT GRANT A VISA TO ONE OF OUR PROSPECTIVE MOSCOW CORRESPONDENTS. TWO QUESTIONS: DO YOU SEE ANY POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THAT, AND SECONDLY, DO YOU RECALL THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT CLEARLY ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO HELP ME FIND OUT WHETHER THEY ARE OBLIGED UNDER THAT AGREEMENT TO GIVE AN ANSWER FOR THIS REJECTION? THEY GAVE NO EXPLANATION.

SECRETARY VANCE: THE ANSWER IS I DO NOT RECALL THOSE PROVISIONS OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT SUFFICIENTLY TO GIVE YOU AN ANSWER, AND SECONDLY, I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE INCIDENT TO WHICH YOU REFER.

QUESTION: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE ATMOSPHERE, MR. SECRETARY?

SECRETARY VANCE: AGAIN, IT WAS BUSINESSLIKE.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, DO YOU HAVE ANY CLEAR IDEAS AT THIS POINT AS TO WHETHER YOU MIGHT STAY OVER ANOTHER DAY OR TWO?

SECRETARY VANCE: LET ME SAY I'M STILL PREPARED TO STAY OVER IF THIS WILL BE USEFUL AND I WOULD THINK I WOULD PROBABLY KNOW BY THE END OF THE MEETING TOMORROW MORNING.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, HOW DOES IT FEEL FOR A FULL DAY TO GO BY WITHOUT YOU GETTING ANY INDICATION FROM THE UNCLASSIFIED

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RUSSIANS ON THE CENTRAL QUESTION TO WHICH YOU'VE COME TO MOSCOW?

SECRETARY VANCE: AS I INDICATED, I THINK THAT THAT IS NOT ONLY EXPECTABLE BUT IN A WAY I AM PLEASED BY THAT BECAUSE IT LEADS ME TO GUESS, AT LEAST, THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO THE PROPOSALS WHICH WE HAVE PUT FORWARD. AS I SAY, I DON'T WANT TO BE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT IT, BUT AT LEAST I THINK THAT ONE CAN DRAW THE KIND OF CONCLUSION THAT I DID FROM THAT.

QUESTION: THERE WERE NO FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS BY THE RUSSIANS ON THE PROPOSAL TODAY?

SECRETARY VANCE: NO, I THINK THE PROPOSAL IS REALLY QUITE CLEAR. MAYBE THERE'LL BE SOME QUESTIONS TOMORROW.

QUESTION: CAN YOU TELL US THE NUMBERS TONIGHT, MR. SECRETARY?

SECRETARY VANCE: (LAUGHS) NOT TONIGHT. (LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: DO YOU EXPECT TO MEET WITH MR. BREZHNEV TOMORROW? DO YOU EXPECT THAT HE'LL BE THERE? HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN AN INDICATION?

SECRETARY VANCE: I HAVE NOT BEEN GIVEN AN INDICATION. LET'S JUST TAKE A COUPLE MORE QUESTIONS BECAUSE I'VE GOT TO GET SOMETHING TO EAT AND GET BACK TO WORK.

QUESTION: SIR, DO YOU EXPECT TO SEE HIM AGAIN BEFORE YOU LEAVE? MR. BREZHNEV?

SECRETARY VANCE: I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE, BUT I THINK PROBABLY
I WILL.

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QUESTION: IN ASSESSING THESE TWO DAYS, MR. SECRETARY,
WOULD YOU SAY YOU ARE MAKING MORE PROGRESS THAN YOU
EXPECTED, LESS, OR ABOUT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

SECRETARY VANCE. I WOULD ANSWER BY SAYING I FOUND THE
DISCUSSIONS TODAY TO BE USEFUL AND HELPFUL.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, ARE THESE WORKING GROUPS YOU
TALK ABOUT, ARE THESE WORKING GROUPS THAT WOULD BE SET
UP FOR THE FUTURE OR JUST TOMORROW?

SECRETARY VANCE: FOR THE FUTURE.

QUESTION: WHERE WOULD THEY MEET: HERE, OR WASHINGTON OR...?

SECRETARY VANCE: EITHER PLACE. COULD MEET IN GENEVA.
THAT DEPENDS ON WHAT SUBJECT THEY DEAL WITH.

QUESTION: IS THIS OUR IDEA, THE WORKING GROUPS?

SECRETARY VANCE: WE BOTH AGREED TO IT.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, COULDNT YOU BE MORE PRECISE ON
WHAT AREAS THEY'RE GOING TO WORK ON AND HOW MANY THEY ARE,
BECAUSE IT MAKES IT VERY DIFFICULT TO WRITE ABOUT.

SECRETARY VANCE: I REALIZE THAT. LET ME JUST SAY AT
THIS POINT THERE WILL BE SEVERAL. I DON'T WANT TO ANNOUNCE,
UNILATERALLY ANNOUNCE, THESE. WE WILL DO IT BILATERALLY
WHE WE DO IT. OKAY, THANKS A LOT.

(END TEXT).
VANCE

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Message Attributes

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